

AMENDMENT TO THE CLAIMS

- 1-16. (Cancelled)
17. (Previously presented) A method comprising:
receiving an incoming call from a caller via a first connection;
placing the incoming call in a queue;
determining information that is associated with the incoming call;
providing to the caller a menu indicating at least one merchant;
receiving from the caller an indication of a merchant;
determining a telephone number associated with the merchant;
establishing a second connection between the caller and the merchant based on
the telephone number, the second connection enabling the caller to make a purchase from
the merchant while the incoming call remains in the queue; and
transferring the incoming call from the queue to an attendant.
18. (Original) The method of claim 17, in which determining the information that is
associated with the incoming call comprises:
receiving the information that is associated with the incoming call from the caller
via an interactive voice response unit (IVRU).
19. (Original) The method of claim 17, in which determining the information that is
associated with the incoming call comprises:
retrieving the information that is associated with the incoming call from a record
of a database, in which the record is associated with the caller.
20. (Original) The method of claim 17, in which determining the information that is
associated with the incoming call comprises:
retrieving the information that is associated with the incoming call from a record
of a database, in which the record is associated with the incoming call.

21. (Original) The method of claim 17, in which providing to the caller the menu comprises:

providing to the caller the menu based on the information that is associated with the incoming call.

22. (Original) The method of claim 17, in which the information that is associated with the incoming call comprises at least one of:

- a time the incoming call was received,
- a time the incoming call has been on hold,
- an indication of a category of the incoming call,
- an indication of a position of the incoming call within the queue,
- a name of the caller,
- an identifier that identifies the caller,
- a telephone number associated with the caller,
- an address associated with the caller,
- data indicating at least one purchase associated with the caller,
- data indicating at least one reservation associated with the caller,
- an indication of an area of expertise of the caller,
- an indication of a rate charged for expertise of the caller, and
- an account identifier that identifies a financial account associated with the caller.

23. (Previously presented) A method, comprising:

receiving an incoming telephone call from a caller;
determining, after the receiving, that an attendant is unavailable to answer the call;

placing, after the determining of the lack of attendant availability, the call in a queue;

offering, after the placing of the call in the queue, the caller a plurality of entertainment options;

receiving, after the offering and from the caller, an indication of a selection of one of the plurality of entertainment options;

establishing, after the receiving of the indication of the selected entertainment option, a connection between the caller and the selected entertainment option while the call remains in the queue;

determining, after the establishing of the connection between the caller and the selected entertainment option, that the attendant is available to answer the call;

notifying, after the determination that the attendant is available, the caller that the attendant is available; and

allowing the caller, after notifying the caller, to choose between (i) maintaining the connection with the selected entertainment option and (ii) establishing a connection with the attendant.